

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (original) An axle saddle for welding to a cylindrical vehicle axle and a rocker- or control-beam of a vehicular suspension system, comprising:

a body forming generally a longitudinal slice of a cylinder, sized to fit closely around a portion of the cylindrical vehicle axle;

said body extending longitudinally between spaced, arcing lateral edges as well as extending in a cylindrical plane between spaced longitudinal edges, said longitudinal edges adapted for forming welded seams to or with the vehicle axle;

said body being formed with at least one longitudinally elongated, slot aperture that is proximately associated and aligned in a generally parallel relation with at least one longitudinal edge, said slot aperture providing an endless weld track and relieving in part the stress load carried through the welded seam of the associated longitudinal edge.

2. (original) The axle saddle of claim 1 further comprising the body at at least one of the longitudinal edges being formed with a recessed-in weld track, having a major longitudinal track portion being flanked between opposite incurved curved portions, wherein said incurved curved portions reduce weld undercutting problems.

3. (original) The axle saddle of claim 1 further comprising the body at at least one of the longitudinal edges having spaced wing extensions to further elongate the measure of said longitudinal edge; said body at that at least one longitudinal edge being formed with a recessed-in weld track, having a major longitudinal track portion being flanked between opposite incurved curved portions, wherein said incurved curved portions reduce weld undercutting problems.

4. (original) An axle saddle for welding to a cylindrical vehicle axle and a rocker- or control-beam of a vehicular suspension system, comprising:

a body forming generally a longitudinal slice of a cylinder, sized to fit closely around a portion of the cylindrical vehicle axle;

said body extending longitudinally between spaced, arcing lateral edges as well as extending in a cylindrical plane between spaced longitudinal edges, said longitudinal edges adapted for forming welded seams to or with the vehicle axle;

said body having, along at least one of the longitudinal edges, spaced wing extensions to further elongate the measure of said longitudinal edge; said body at that at least one longitudinal edge being formed with a recessed-in weld track, having a major longitudinal track portion being flanked between opposite incurved curved portions, wherein said incurved curved portions reduce weld undercutting problems.

5. (original) The axle saddle of claim 4 further comprising the body being formed with at least one longitudinally elongated, slot aperture that is proximately associated and aligned in a generally parallel relation with at least one longitudinal edge, said slot aperture providing an endless weld track and relieving in part the stress load carried through the welded seam of the associated longitudinal edge.

6-11. (canceled)

12. (new) An axle saddle for welding to an elongated vehicle axle having an angularly-endless outer surface extending between spaced axle-ends, said axle saddle furthermore being adapted for connecting up to a vehicular suspension system such as a rocker- or control-beam thereof; said axle saddle comprising:

a body having a concave inner surface as well as a spaced convex outer surface and not only extending longitudinally between spaced, arcing lateral edges but also extending angularly between spaced longitudinal edges, said longitudinal edges adapted for forming welded seams to or with the vehicle axle;

said body being formed with at least one longitudinally-elongated slot aperture that is proximately associated and aligned in a generally parallel relation with at least one longitudinal edge, said slot aperture providing an endless weld track and relieving in part the stress load carried through the welded seam of the associated longitudinal edge.

13. (new) The axle saddle of claim 12 further comprising the body at least one of the longitudinal edges being formed with a recessed-in weld track, having a major longitudinal track portion being flanked between opposite incurved curved portions, wherein said incurved curved portions reduce weld undercutting problems.

14. (new) The axle saddle of claim 12 further comprising the body at at least one of the longitudinal edges having spaced wing extensions to further elongate the measure of said longitudinal edge; said body at that at least one longitudinal edge being formed with a recessed-in weld track, having a major longitudinal track portion being flanked between opposite incurved curved portions, wherein said incurved curved portions reduce weld undercutting problems.

15. (new) The axle saddle of claim 12 wherein said body's concave inner surface is formed for general close-surrounding conformance over angularly-extending portions of the vehicle-axle's angularly-endless outer surface.

16. (new) The axle saddle of claim 15 wherein said body's concave inner surface traces a cylindrical patch whereby said concave inner surface is adapted for close-surrounding conformance over cylindrical vehicle axles.

17. (new) The axle saddle of claim 16 wherein said body's convex outer surface traces a cylindrical patch whereby said axle saddle is producible from plate stock.